



Georgia On My Mind

Monthly Newsletter of the ARRL Georgia Section



January 2024

New Year! New Section Manager!

Items of Interest in this edition

New Section Manager	p. 1
New SM, note from Editor	p. 2
License Plate Bill	p. 3
Upcoming Events, State Mtg.	p. 4
ARISS (in the news & applications)	p. 5
Club Activities	p. 6-8
Awards & New Licenses	p. 9
ARES Info, TechFest, Vol.Opp.	p. 10

Upcoming Events

1/27/24 - Winter Field Day

<https://winterfieldday.org/>

2/24/24 - Dalton Hamfest

<https://www.facebook.com/DaltonAmateurRadioClub/>

3/9/24 - State ARES Meeting

4/6-7/24 - Georgia State Parks on the Air

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/539409114342595>

4/6-7/24 - Alabama State Parks on the Air

Georgia on My Mind is a monthly newsletter of the ARRL, Georgia Section, highlighting the activities of Amateur Radio Operators and Clubs within the State.

To submit pictures, articles, or notices, please email the editor Karen Spradlin, K4LJS, at GeorgiaSectionARRL@gmail.com before the 5th of each month.

To see previous issues of **Georgia on My Mind**:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1f6WBBhYzN-4Z-D69x0ceGIIPgCqulWI1?usp=share_link

Congratulations to our new Section Manager, Hank Blackwood, K4HYJ!



I had a chance to talk with Hank and get to know a little about his history and outlook for the State.

What do you do for a living?

I am the Chief Technology Services Officer for OptiLink, Dalton Utilities, one of the first municipally owned residential Fiber-to-the-Home deployments in the United States,.

How long have you been a ham?

Since 1994 - My first exposure to the world of ham radio was when I was five or six years old. My parents took me to visit a friend; he was a ham radio operator (HRO). I recall sitting in his lap, watching him. He had QSL cards from all over the world on his wall. My dad saw my interest and encouraged that with a shortwave radio. We could hear HROs talking from all over the world, and the world suddenly seemed much bigger. Between the 1970s and 1994, there was a gap when the fumes kicked in; gas fumes and, perfumes and ham radio took a back seat! In 1994, my college roommate suggested we get our ham radio licenses. We started studying for the exam, and after graduation, we got our Technicians license.

What is your level of license?

I earned my Extra in 2013. In 2011, a friend in Dalton asked me how to get licensed; he challenged me to get my General if he got his Technician Class license. We both succeeded.

New Section Manager, cont.

What are your favorite modes/bands/activities?

POTA, SOTA, single sideband on HF, VHF Packet, and probably my favorite activity is chasing the 5 DXCC award. I really enjoy chasing parks & summits, and occasionally, I like to activate them.

What is your favorite or first radio?

I still enjoy my first shortwave receiver. It is a Zenith Trans-oceanic "Portable" – the size of a small suitcase. Today, my favorite rig to operate for portable operation is a 20-meter Single Side Band MFJ transceiver.

How long have you been involved in ARES?

Almost 15 years.

Do you have any Accomplishments, certificates, WAS, or cool contacts you would like readers to know about?

Yes, I built a 300 baud packet modem early on in the 90's and used it to check in to a VHF packet radio BBS. I also achieved my first DXCC award in less than 18 months after I passed my General exam, using only "100 watts and a wire". I earned a WAS phone certificate shortly thereafter.

What positions or offices have you held?

Yes, I have been the D-Rats Net Manager for the state of Georgia. I am EC for Whitfield County, Georgia, managing the k4hy-15 digipeater and the k4hy-10 winlink packet gateway. I also maintain the Dalton Amateur Radio Club's EchoLink node. I am currently also serving as Assistant DEC for the NW GA District. I have served as an NCS for the state PSK net in the past, NCS for the Northwest District's phone, Winlink, PSK and D-Rats nets, and currently am an NCS for the state Winlink Net.

What encouraged you want run for Section Manager?

I initially hesitated to apply, but several hams encouraged me to throw my name in the hat. I enjoy the public safety and the public service aspect. Those appeal to me as a hobby.

What are the foremost issues you want to tackle as Section Manager?

License plates. We have made legislative contacts to offer assistance in getting the state bill passed. Getting the bill passed would not only increase the

number of ham radio plates on the road but would ultimately raise awareness of the hobby. (see p. 3)

I also believe it is important to continue developing effective working relationships with our served agencies. Ham radio is an effective tool that needs to be exploited. It is an army standing by to help in times of need.

What are your outreach plans to rural GA, particularly participation in Southern GA?

I want to work with and get to know the local leadership south of Macon and help those operators become more involved in the GA Section. They are often the hardest hit part of the state with hurricane remnants from the south. I want to be sure the training and tools are available for membership to grow there.



Seeking news gatherers / reporters

The *Georgia on My Mind* newsletter is looking for regional help around the state of Georgia.



With 159 Counties, 9 ARES districts, and numerous ad hoc groups, it is very difficult to get timely information on the happenings around the state.

The editor is seeking a group of individuals who would be interested in helping gather information from their general area and passing it along. It would be a great help towards making this newsletter more relevant to the State ARRL membership. Currently, Kathleen McCook, KN4IJM from Athens has agreed to help with the NE portion of the state.

Regional contact information can be provided, just shoot Karen an email at GeorgiaARRLSection@gmail.com.

Georgia House Bill 706



Make your next contact your Georgia Representative and Senator

Ask them to support HB 706 and remove the license plate fees for the Georgia Amateur Radio License Plate!

Tell your Representative and Senator you are one of over 19,000 Amateur Radio Operators in the State of Georgia and ask them to support and help pass **House Bill 706**, sponsored by Alan Powell (House District #33) and Leesa Hagan (House District 156) and reinstate the original Amateur Radio License Plate without the special license plate fees.

Do you know your Georgia Representative or Senator's contact? Put in your home address at this website: <https://pluralpolicy.com/find-your-legislator/>

Write it down and save their email address and phone number

Write them an email (use the template below or your own words) and tell them:

- Your call sign and you're a member of _____ Radio Club, one of more than 60 clubs in the state that help's train and provide emergency services and community support by providing access to its area communications network.
- Specifically mention your participation in county Emergency Management, ARES or AuxComm or SkyWarn or CERT and/or another programs. Amateur Radio is now included in the FEMA Guide for National Emergency Preparedness. (Read ARRL QST June 2023 edition, page 78).
- You are self-supporting, buying and maintaining your own equipment for your base station and mobile/portable station that can be used for emergency response for county, state and federal programs. (Mention your training and

practice, tell them about your last NET, POTA, contest, completed all county, state, country certification requirements and how you set up and make contacts).

- If you are a Veteran, tell them your skills learned in the military and now apply as an Amateur Radio Operator. (Communications, technical, tactical support, etc.).

Send your email to your Georgia Representative and Senator at least 3, 4 or more times.

Be sure to copy the Speakers Office at jon.burns@house.ga.gov as well as Rep. Powell alan.powell@house.ga.gov and Rep. Hagan leesa.hagan@house.ga.gov.

Working together as an Amateur Radio community, it can be done. Share this with your family and friends asking for their support by contacting their Representative and Senator as well.

The best part is when it passes, **ARRL Georgia Section will design a new Georgia Amateur Radio license plate!**

42nd DALTON HAMFEST
February 24, 2024

500 Legion Dr
Dalton, Ga 30721
8am-2pm
\$5 admission
\$10 tables
\$5 per boneyard space

free parking in field
License Testing

3 LARGE BUILDINGS OF RADIO GEAR!!

For details contact via email at w4drchamfest@yahoo.com
or W4DRC ON QRZ.COM

Upcoming Events



Valdosta State University Radio Club
Blazed Hams

January Meetings & Events

Friday, January 12 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Welcome Back Meeting	Friday, January 19 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Radio Room Time #1
Friday, January 26 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Radio Room Time #2	Saturday, January 27 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Winter Field Day & License Test Opportunity

For more details on these meetings and events, email us at blazedhams@valdosta.edu

As of Jan. 18th these 17 parks do not have anyone claiming them for either of the two days. It's time to get some on your calendar for another great GA-POTA event.

K-0636: Jekyll Island State Park
K-2165: A. H. Stephens State Park
K-2172: Elijah Clark State Park
K-2174: Florence Marina State Park
K-2175: Fort McAllister State Park
K-2180: George T. Bagby State Park
K-2183: Hamburg State Park
K-2187: James H. (Sloppy) Floyd State Park
K-2189: Little Ocmulgee State Park
K-2191: Mistletoe State Park
K-2195: Reed Bingham State Park
K-2197: Seminole State Park
K-2200: Stephen C Foster State Park
K-2201: Sweetwater Creek State Park
K-3728: Providence Canyon State Park
K-7861: Suwannee River Eco-Lodge State Park
K-9798: Centennial Olympic Park

Here is the link for the Activator Registration Form for the 2024 Georgia State Parks on the Air. <http://gaparks.org/gaspota/index.php...>

Although we can "share" parks with other POTA activators, we do want to get as many of the Georgia State Parks on the POTA spotter during the weekend of April 6-7, 2024.



Coastal Amateur Radio Society

The CARS club will be hosting a Ham test session on March 9, 2024, at 0900hrs. If you would like to take your first test or upgrade to a higher level, please come and take advantage. We will be at the White Bluff Presbyterian Church in their education building. Please email Bryan Strickland, N4GSP, @ Bryanhstrickland@gmail.com, and let us know you are coming. I will need your FCC FRN number. We will need this number even if you have tested with us before. Also, please arrive a few minutes early for registration so that we may start promptly at 0900 hrs.

State ARES Meeting

The State ARES Meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2024, at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, GA. Reserve the date!

It is vital that anyone thinking to attend this event register ASAP. If the State determines that there are not adequate registrations, they will cancel our reservation of the facility.

GEMA has added this event to their Training Calendar so ARES members can register for the event. The link to the page is:

<https://training.gema.ga.gov/TRS/courseDesc.do?cofid=58218&sourcePage=Calendar&date=03-09-2024>

- Click on: 'I want to register.'
- On the login screen make sure that you use your **GEMA** training username and password. If you don't have a GEMA training login, you can create one.
- After logging in, click on 'Register' to begin the registration process.

If you have previously registered, most of the fields will already have your contact information. Update any the data with any changes needed. Check the box at the bottom and click 'Submit'. Your registration will show you on the 'Wait List'. This is the standard GEMA process. You will be approved later.

Lee Stone, KT4LS

[GAARES](#) - Section Emergency Coordinator

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS)

Great story by NBC Today Show about these kids getting a ham license, raising funds for equipment, and coordinating an ARISS (Amateur Radio on the ISS) contact for their school. Bravo.

We will be doing a similar thing here in Marietta GA in April with the Mountain View Elementary school. Dr. Cassondra Zielinski (now licensed at KQ4JVI) is leading the team for an ARISS contact for her school of over 900 students. She is the STEM teacher for all grade levels and is giving her students something to remember for the rest of their lives.

Martin Buehring, KB4MG

Cherokee County Amateur Radio Society

<https://www.today.com/video/high-school-students-use-ham-radio-skills-to-contact-space-station-201408581756?search=ham%20radio&fbclid=IwAR3-uw5EKVdbhrWteo7NWVFFyoMUXDWGCouH-UqVoal0KT-9l1k7uzznWMw>



ARISS
Amateur Radio on the International Space Station

The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Program is seeking formal and informal education institutions and organizations, individually or working together, to host an Amateur Radio contact with a crew member onboard the ISS. ARISS anticipates that the contacts would be held between **July 1, 2024** and **December 31, 2024**. Crew scheduling and ISS orbits will determine exact contact dates. To maximize these radio contact opportunities, ARISS is looking for organizations that will draw large numbers of participants and integrate the contact into a well-developed education plan.

The deadline to submit a proposal is February 29, 2024. Proposal information and more details such as expectations, proposal guidelines and the proposal form can be found at www.ariss.org. An ARISS Introductory Webinar session will be held January 17, 2024 at 7 PM ET. **The Zoom link to sign up is:** https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcrc-qsrD0pGNLBvhR_2p5O9uTeRzO0u4Sw

The Opportunity

Crew members aboard the International Space Station will participate in scheduled ARISS amateur radio contacts. These radio contacts are approximately 10 minutes in length and allow stu-

dents to interact with the astronauts through a question-and-answer session.

An ARISS contact is a voice communication opportunity via amateur radio between astronauts and cosmonauts aboard the space station and classrooms and communities. ARISS contacts afford education audiences the opportunity to learn firsthand from astronauts what it is like to live and work in space and to learn about space research conducted on the ISS. Students also will have an opportunity to learn about satellite communication, wireless technology, and radio science. Because of the nature of human spaceflight and the complexity of scheduling activities aboard the ISS, organizations must demonstrate flexibility to accommodate changes in dates and times of the radio contact.

Amateur radio organizations around the world with the support of NASA and space agencies in Russia, Canada, Japan and Europe present educational organizations with this opportunity. The ham radio organizations' volunteer efforts provide the equipment and operational support to enable communication between crew on the ISS and students around the world using amateur radio. Please direct any questions to education@ariss-usa.org.

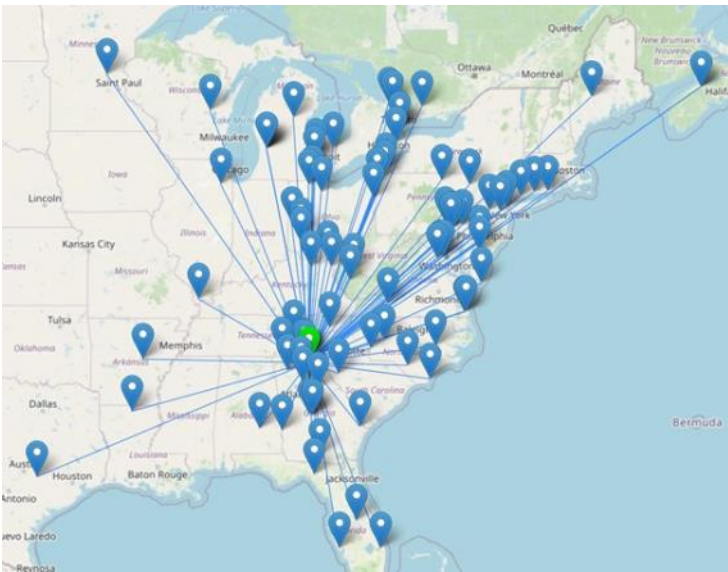
About ARISS:

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) is a cooperative venture of international amateur radio societies and the space agencies that support the International Space Station (ISS). In the United States, sponsors are the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT), NASA's Space Communications and Navigation program (SCaN) and the ISS National Lab—Space Station Explorers. The primary goal of ARISS is to promote exploration of science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics topics. ARISS does this by organizing scheduled contacts via amateur radio between crew members aboard the ISS and students. Before and during these radio contacts, students, educators, parents, and communities take part in hands-on learning activities tied to space, space technologies, and amateur radio. For more information, see <http://www.ariss.org>.

Club Activities

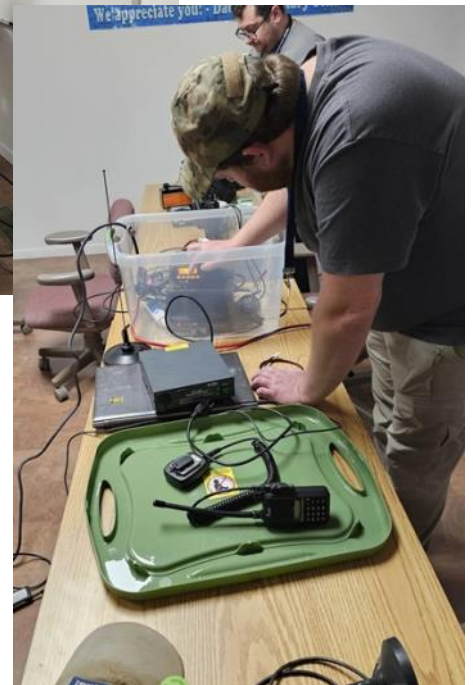
North Georgia Tri-State Amateur Radio Club (Blairsville)

I (Andrew Burnette, K4OTT) took [Jerry](#) KO4HJD out for his first activation Dec. 21. To top it off, it was a 3fer. It was cold and the rock face in front of us was covered in ice but I think he has the POTA bug bad now. I showed him that his WRC and the faraday cloth really works. Then we switched to my 40m efhw to finish off the activation. 101 in the log. Thanks to all that hunted us.



Dade County WinLink Class

January 6, 2024



Dalton Radio Club

New Toy for Greg De-slattes, K0VD



Club Activities

Yet Another Winter Project

This winter and with help from Santa Claus bringing an ICOM IC-705 I have completed my third go-box build. Unlike my earlier go-box builds, this one is oriented for POTA activations and a more compact travel solution. (ARES deployment is a secondary consideration, recognizing the power out limitations of the IC-705.)

The first go-box build was based on an ICOM ID-5100 contained within a RIDGID brand Pro Organizer with the RIDGID Tool Cart holding a 30 ah LiFePO₄, coax, tools, etc. The second go-box held in a 4U server case an ICOM ID-7100, Yaesu FT-400XDR, PSU and Kantronics KPC3+. These first two go-boxes were oriented at and saw lots of ARES field work. The second box with its IC-7100 also saw service in Parks on the Air (POTA) activations.

There are so many choices to make in building a radio go-box. First step is to define its mission and the requirements to meet that mission. Example, the first go-box with ID-5100 is oriented at rapid deployment to local area ARES operations, primarily voice and if needed off-grid. It also had a Signalink for digital work. The second go-box with its dual-radio setup allows for parallel operation on HF bands and local area voice plus digital operation. Its mission also primarily ARES field work then later POTA. The third go-box build is a mission change with it focusing on POTA wrapped around the ICOM IC-705 radio.

This third build has the IC-705, its antenna tuner packed in foam cutout slots within a RIDGID Pro Organizer case. A large area cutout in the foam provides storage for a roll of coax, speaker/mic, an antenna duplexer, and a few other items. There are a few attractive features of the Pro Organizer: weather resistant, lockable and it snap-lock stacks on other RIDGID products such as the tool cart.



For the rest of discussion, we'll focus on the power source change for this new build, moving away from the power/tool cart to a smaller, substantially lighter hand-carry box. As before weather resistant.

The DIY power box service requirements include powering the IC-705, its AT-705 tuner, a laptop and charge ports for USB A and C devices. Operating time should allow for half-day POTA operation in both digital and voice modes.

I must say that there was feature creep in the power source solution. With what originally started out as only a LiFePO₄ battery with an external battery charge wart saw the inclusion of a West Mountain brand Epic PwrGate. The PwrGate has nice features to include auto switching between battery and external power, battery charging and direct solar panel input.

The Harbor Freight Tactical Ammo/Utility Box used in the construction provides sufficient space for a low profile ECO-Worthy brand 20 ah LiFePO₄ battery. It is low enough that it allows me to retain use of the internal, removable tray. One side of the tray is reserved space for the power outlets on the lid. The opposite side is where I store the battery charger. So, if I have external 13.8 VDC for primary power it will use the Epic PwrGate to charge the battery. If I have 120 VAC but not a PSU, I'll plug in the power wart LiFePO₄ charger. Down the road I may add a solar panel!

The top of the box has a quick access compartment that is used for power out connections. There are two sets of Anderson PowerPoles that are for radio and tuner usage.



A car 12 VDC receptacle, a combination USB A and C charge port adapter, voltage monitor and a power switch controlling these three items. There is enough room in the tray for the wall wart battery charger (a portion of the tray space is taken up by the lid mounted interior side of the power out devices).

On one side of the box are two bulkhead mounted Anderson PowerPole connectors. One is for solar panel input and the other for external 13.8 VDC input. The third connector is an inline jack socket used by the wall wart charger going direct to the battery's charge port.

Club Activities

continued...

I did not realize when I first added the Epic PwrGate into the box configuration that the PwrGate draws residual (parasitic) power, a small amount but nonetheless a drain source. I could just unplug the battery from the PwrGate when it is not in use putting a little wear and tear on the associated Anderson PowerPoles. Adding the master battery switch between the battery and the PwrGate makes it more user friendly.



All wiring is done with scrap pieces of 12 awg strand wire. Power out from the Epic PwrGate runs thru an opening in the interior tray to a marine grade 6-port (only using three ports) fuse block I had lying around. There's a master 30-amp auto style fuse between the battery and the PwrGate. If I need to remove the tray to access this fuse, the battery or PwrGate its one pair of PowerPoles to disconnect next to the fuse block.

How much did this power box cost to build? Well pre-Epic PwrGate feature creep roughly \$175 (got a great Cyber Monday deal on the battery). Post feature creep right around \$400.

Fun stuff ...

Mark N7GRB

Technical Specialist, GA Section ARRL

Chattooga Radio Club

WOOHOO A new record for check ins was set to-night (1/8/24) for the CARC Monday night club net. The previous record was 28 and we had 32 to-night. Thanks to all who took the time to stop by. I appreciate everybody who helped set this new milestone.

Athens Radio Club Annual Report

Past president, Jess Hickey (in red), N4JAH, passed the gavel to our 2024 president, Bill McGee, N4WHM.

In 2023 the Athens Radio Club held 4 Special Events - Winter Field Day -W4G-coordinated by Claude Ray, AC4SH (January); N1D at Sanford Stadium co-coordinated by Jess Hickey, N4JAH and Claude Ray, AC4SH, (April); ARRL Field Day, W4H- Coordinated by Chris Morgan, KC5BKS. (June); and - Wicked for Halloween-W4H-coordinated by Claude Ray, AC4SH (October).



The ARC held 10 meetings with programs, a swap meet, and a holiday party. A new QSL card was created, stand-up banners were established, and ARC logo gear was organized.

The ARC website added a new section for Silent Keys. The ioGroups site added many photos from ARC Special Events and meetings.

ARC had a very successful year supporting the hobby. VEC, James L. Reeves, KF4AQO reported 6 testing sessions and 2 ham crams. 47 exams were administered including those who earned Tech and General at one session. 30 individuals earned a license - 27 earned a Tech, 7 earned General, 1 Extra.

Public Service events included the University of Georgia Football Games and races. Clarke County ARES was active and provided monthly updates.

ARC members were active in Parks on the Air (POTA see website here: Parks on the Air | POTA | Parks program for amateur radio.). Claude Ray, AC4SH, activated all the state parks in Georgia a POTA Award category with only 2 other operators. Georgia State Parks across the state engaged many ARC members in April 2023.

Elections were held in November. Bill McGee, N4WHM was elected President. Other 2023 officers were re-elected. A new Webmaster is needed.

There were 30 dues paying members in 2023 including 5 life members.

Awards / New Hams

New Amateur Radio Licenses

Chattooga Radio Club -
1/11/24

Doug Suits - Tech →

Amateur Radio Club of Au-
gusta - 1/13/24

John LeMaster - Tech

Atlanta Radio Club -
1/14/24

Elmer KC2FDU - Tech

William - Tech

Paul KQ4MKJ - Extra

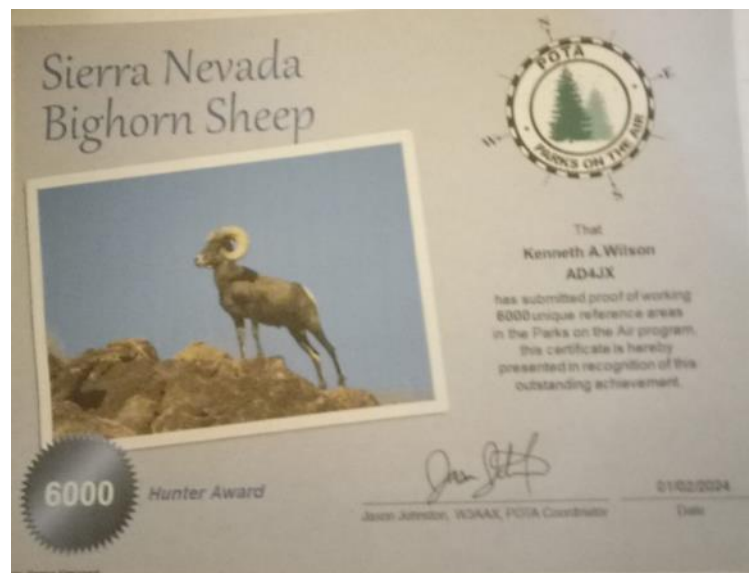
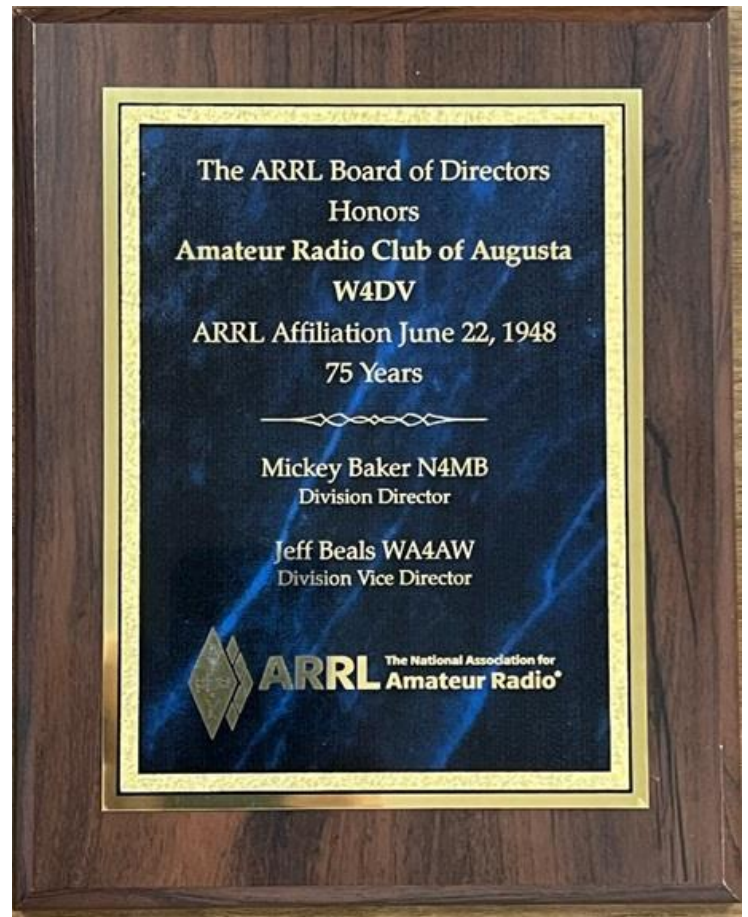
Scott KQ4NBC - General

Michael - Tech

Shawn N4DXS - General

Middle Georgia Radio Association

Cainan Whelchel KQ4DAP - Extra



Dots, Dashes & Tidbits

Georgia Section Nets

ARES Phone & Digital Nets

Note: GA ARES Net information can be found at gaares.org – Select Nets & Frequencies

Georgia Section ARES Net:

Section Net Manager – Frank Hobbs, KN4QJ

kn4qj@arrl.net

Net control operator – Frank Hobbs, KN4QJ

Alt. net control operator – Jim Altman, W4UCK

Georgia Section ARES Digital Nets:

Section Digital Net Manager, Don Jones, K4GO

k4go@arrl.net

Digital Team Leaders also serve as net control operators.

Winlink Net Manager, Russell Prevost, AB4QQ

Net control operators: Brian Freeman KN4DLT, Hank Blackwood K4HYJ, Bill Hall K9HRO, David Blubaugh ND1J

PSK & Traffic Nets Team Lead, Del Davis, W4DEL

Interim Team Lead: Kory Oldham, W4RZ

Net control operators: Bob Garza K4TLG, Don Jones K4GO Ken Wallis KM4HOS, Richard Austin W4BYT

D-RATS Net Team Lead, Hank Blackwood, K4HYJ

Net control operators: Rial Sloan AI4ZV, Brian Freeman KN4DLT, Ed Walraven KM4IOA, Carter Grant KN4KBL

DStar Net 3rd Monday of every month, 8:30pm on REF030B

A.R.E.S. Monthly Report for December 2023

Number of DEC/ECs reporting - 46

Number of ARES nets - 1296

Nets with NTS liaison - 5

Number of Exercises &

Training Sessions - 567 (2380hrs.)

Number of Public Service events - 14 (? hrs.)

Number of Emergency Operations - 4 (16 hrs.)

Number of SkyWarn Operations - 9 (34 hrs.)

Total of Exercises & Events 594

Total of person hours 2430



Ricky Bramlett, NG4DX has accepted appointment to the position of Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator – Membership. Ricky can be reached at: Membership@gaares.org

Ham Radio Volunteers Needed

Event: Publix Marathon

When: Sunday, February 25th, 2024

Where: Downtown Atlanta

Sign Up: [Atlanta Track Club Website](http://AtlantaTrackClubWebsite)

Enter the password “ham2023” to sign up for the “Communications – Ham Operator” position.

This is a public service event that offers a good training opportunity for GA ARES members.

Details: The Publix Atlanta Marathon is a major event and needs operators to communicate for race officials, water stops, pace vehicles, SAG (Support and Gear) wagons, and bicyclists. There is a new route this year. The race will start and end at the Home Depot Backyard of the Mercedes Benz Stadium.

The first draft of assignments will be sent out on or around February 11, 2024.

Home Depot Backyard, 80 Northside Drive NW, Atlanta, GA

TechFest January 13, 2024

The TechFest hotdog lunch and Chili Cook-Off were a favorite, too, as usual.

